

RECOGNIZING MRS. BETTY LOU
LOCH

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise to recognize Mrs. Betty Lou Loch on the occasion of her 90th birthday celebration. Mrs. Loch was born on May 23, 1921 at the St. Francis Hospital in Maryville, Missouri. She is the daughter of the late William and Maude Butler.

Mrs. Loch is an active member of her community but more importantly, she is a proud mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother.

Mrs. Loch is celebrating this special day with her two children, Robert Edwin Loch, Jr. and James William Loch; two daughter-in-laws, Mildred Loch and Jessica Loch; four grandchildren, Robert Edwin Loch, III, Courtney Susan Loch, Jaimie William Loch, and Brittney Jayne Loch, and; two great-grandchildren, Robert Colman Loch and James Quinton Loch.

Mr. Speaker, this celebration will bring together close friends and four generations of the Loch family, which is truly remarkable. So I ask that you join me in wishing Mrs. Betty Lou Loch a happy 90th birthday.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MR.
WILLIAM G. BATCHELDER JR.

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Mr. William G. Batchelder Jr., a prominent lawyer and civic leader from Medina, Ohio, who passed away at the age of 96 on May 7, 2011.

Mr. Batchelder was born on July 30, 1914 in Cleveland's Collinwood neighborhood. His family moved to Medina in 1929, and in 1932 he graduated from Medina High School. Upon graduating, William went on to study economics and history at Ohio Wesleyan University. During his senior year, he was awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Cincinnati Law School; he passed the Ohio bar exam in 1939.

William returned to Medina in the summer of 1939 with his wife Eleanor and immediately opened his own private practice. Just five months later, he decided to run for Medina County Prosecutor, and would serve in this position from 1941 until 1953. While serving as Prosecutor, in 1942, William enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served his country bravely in the South Pacific during World War II for three years, and rose to the rank of sergeant. Meanwhile, back in Medina, he became the father of his first child and was re-elected as County Prosecutor.

In the 1950s Mr. Batchelder completed his duties as County Prosecutor and began working as a trial lawyer with the Cleveland law firm of Thompson, Hine & Flory. However, in 1957, he left the prominent firm and formed a partnership with Harold Williams in Medina; the firm was named Williams and Batchelder. He would continue to try cases until the age of 93.

In addition to William's impressive career, he was also a dedicated community leader. In 1946, he was elected as the director of the Medina Chamber of Commerce and as chairman of the Medina County Rent Control Committee. Several years later, in 1952, William was elected as president of the Medina County Bar Association. Throughout the years he was involved with the Medina County Boy Scouts, Medina Community Chest, United Way of Medina County and served as president of the Medina City School Board of Education. Mr. Batchelder also sat as chairman of the Medina County Republican Party Executive Committee during the 1950s and 1980s.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in remembrance of Mr. William G. Batchelder. I extend my deepest condolences to his five children, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

CONGRESSIONAL FREEDOM OF
THE PRESS CAUCUS ON WORLD
PRESS FREEDOM

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2011

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the thousands of men and women of the media here and around the world who strive every day—many of them in the face of extreme violence and repression—to report the news. This is the lifeblood of democracy. I do so as Co-Chairman of the bipartisan, bicameral Freedom of the Press Caucus, and on behalf of fellow Co-Chairman of the Caucus, Rep. MIKE PENCE.

Chartered 18 years ago by the UN, World Press Freedom Day was hosted for the first time this year in the United States and was marked by a three-day conference here in Washington attended by journalists and media leaders from around the world. World Press Freedom Day isn't, however, fundamentally an academic or congratulatory exercise, Mr. Speaker. Rather, as defined by the United Nations:

"It serves as an occasion to inform citizens of violations of press freedom—a reminder that in dozens of countries around the world, publications are censored, fined, suspended and closed down, while journalists, editors and publishers are harassed, attacked, detained and even murdered.

"It is a date to encourage and develop initiatives in favour of press freedom, and to assess the state of press freedom worldwide.

"It serves as a reminder to governments of the need to respect their commitment to press freedom and is also a day of reflection among media professionals about issues of press freedom and professional ethics.

"Just as importantly, World Press Freedom Day is a day of support for media which are targets for the restraint, or abolition, of press freedom. It is also a day of remembrance for those journalists who lost their lives in the exercise of their profession."

One journalist who was brutally taken from us was, of course, Daniel Pearl of the Wall Street Journal, whose name last year graced the bipartisan Freedom of the Press Act. That legislation emphatically put Congress, the President and our Nation strongly on record in

support of freedom of expression by mandating more detailed reporting than ever on its fate around the world in our State Department's annual Human Rights Report.

Significantly, Mr. Speaker, Congress expressly required in The Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act that the State Department chronicle not only where repression is at its most brutal and obvious, but also to shine a bright light on "indirect sources of pressure, and censorship by governments"

In the past months we have seen an unprecedented wave of protests and demonstrations sweep the Arab world. Two governments—in Tunisia and Egypt—have fallen to the demands of pro-democracy protesters, while others have come under intense pressure. These uprisings have highlighted the level of violence and physical harassment directed at the press. We've seen journalists threatened, arrested, beaten, assaulted, and in some cases even killed, while working on the frontlines in the fight for democracy and greater opportunity.

After two months of silence, Lara Logan, the CBS reporter who was sexually assaulted by a mob in Cairo's Tahrir Square the night that President Mubarak stepped down in February, opened up about the brutal attack in an emotional interview on "60 Minutes" Sunday. Logan, whose attack shined a light on the dangers that female journalists face while working abroad, said she is proud to have broken the silence on what some female journalists have experienced but never talk about for fear they will be taken off the story.

ABC's Christiane Amanpour and Fox News Channel's Greg Palkot and Olaf Wiig also faced physical assault and intimidation during the protests that swept Mubarak from his post—notable examples out of as many as 100 journalists who were assaulted, threatened or detained during the uprising in Egypt.

Elsewhere in the Arab world, four New York Times reporters were taken captive by Libyan government soldiers outside of Benghazi in March. After enduring harassment and abuse, they were thankfully released.

Less fortunate were award-winning photojournalists Tim Hetherington and Chris Hondros, two of the most seasoned photojournalists, who were killed while covering a battle between rebels and Libyan government forces in the city of Misrata. Theirs is not only a loss to their friends and families, but also a great loss to the profession.

Freedom of expression cannot exist where journalists are not safe from persecution and attack, which have an unnerving effect on the profession. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 16 journalists have been tragically killed this year. Alarming, the failure to punish or even seriously investigate crimes against journalists has now reached appalling proportions.

And although one can certainly find such censorship in the Middle East and North Africa, or in countries such as China, Cuba, Kazakhstan, South Korea and Syria, sadly it exists and may be getting worse much closer to home.

As just reported last month by the State Department—and as borne out by major 2010 reports of the Organization of American States, the Committee to Protect Journalists, Freedom House, and many others—our own hemisphere is home to many disturbing examples of what Ms. June Erlick, a former correspondent now with the David Rockefeller

Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard called a “much more insidious” form of press repression. Quoted in the Committee to Protect Journalists’ “Attacks on the Press 2010” report, Ms. Erick elaborated that, “You never know where the censorship is coming from—through threats, attacks on the streets, new laws, or lack of access. The threats are always there and sometimes lead to self-censorship even before censorship begins.”

In the spirit of this World Press Freedom Day, Mr. Speaker, let me then use the balance of my time to turn over just a few of these “much more insidious” rocks:

In Venezuela, the government has engaged in what CPJ unambiguously calls “a systematic campaign to stifle dissent.” It included barring the publication of photos in conjunction with reporting on rampant crime and unsolved murder cases; suddenly voiding the broadcasting license of the nation’s oldest television channel and a major critic of the government; and exploiting or inventing technical regulations to administratively shut down dozens of radio stations also critical of the government.

In Ecuador, the OAS’ 2009 Report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights special rapporteur for freedom of expression found that, “Ecuador has seen a rising climate of polarization in which attacks on and threats against journalists and media outlets of all editorial positions have increased”; a March 3 Inter-American Press Association report stated flatly that the government had “redoubled its offensive” against press freedom; and, just last month our own State Department’s 2010 Human Rights Report found—among many other actions—that, “In June and July, during the broadcast of the Soccer World Cup matches, the government ran a media campaign against the press, referring to media outlets as corrupt and delinquent.”

... And, in Argentina—according to The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, and The Financial Times among many other outlets—for more than two years the government has waged an escalating war against critical media outlets. Specifically, the government: was just found by the nation’s Supreme Court to have unconstitutionally allocated government advertising funds to reward news outlets favorable to its policies while withholding such funds from opponents; shut down and tried to literally force the sale of the nation’s biggest private internet service provider; orchestrated a surprise raid by 200 federal tax agents on the offices of the nation’s largest media company and then dismissed the raids as a “mistake”; and—in a series of moves taken directly from the original Peronists’ playbook—is seeking aggressively to seize control of the nation’s newsprint supply to silence opposition newspapers by literally making it impossible for them to go to press.

These are just a few of the things happening in a few of the countries in our own backyard, Mr. Speaker, that justify—indeed, demand that Congress remain vigilant and vocal in defense of freedom of expression everywhere . . . not just on World Press Freedom Day, but every day of every year.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF VINCENT JOHN SKINDELL

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember Vincent John Skindell. Vincent passed away unexpectedly on Friday, May 13, 2011 in a car accident.

Vincent Skindell was born on August 19, 1960 to Vincent M. and Carol (nee Kaska) Skindell. Vincent was a 1978 graduate of Brunswick High School and an evening manager at Goodyear Tire in Brunswick for 12 years. He enjoyed the outdoors, especially gardening, fishing, and hunting and enjoyed shooting pool also.

Vincent was preceded in death by his father Vincent and his son Joshua Skindell. Vincent is survived by his wife Shawn (nee McGee); his daughter Tara Painting; his grandchildren Faith and Noah Painting; his mother Carol; his step-children Christie Stiffler and Jennifer Pasquale and step-grandchildren Matthew, Nicholas, and Michael Stiffler and Allison and Olivia Pasquale.

Vincent is also survived by his brother Michael, who is a State Senator in Ohio, representing Cleveland, Lakewood, Parma, and other Cleveland suburbs in the 10th Congressional District. Vincent was always supportive and active in Michael’s campaigns as a Lakewood City Councilman, a State Representative, and State Senator. I would frequently see Vincent and his family at campaign events for Michael and at my own events.

Mr. Speaker and respected colleagues, please join me in remembering Vincent John Skindell, citizen and friend, and in offering condolences to his family who are now grieving his loss.

RECOGNIZING VICTIMS OF CONCENTRATION CAMP IN OMARSKA

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2011

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victims of a notorious concentration camp in Omarska, located in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the summer of 1992, Omarska was the site of murder, torture and other mass violations of human rights. It is thanks to the courage of the British journalists Ed Vulliamy, Penny Marshall and Ian Williams and their brave reporting, that the world learned about the horrors of Omarska in the last decade of the 20th century.

As we remember the victims of Omarska, let us reinforce the significance of remembrance and the right of the survivors and families of the victims to mark this tragic chapter in the history of Europe.

CONGRATULATING ZOE FROMER, KIRILL SAFIN, AND IZAAL LAKHIA OF ATLANTIC HIGH SCHOOL IN DELRAY BEACH, FL ON THE FOUNDING OF INITIATIVE RENAISSANCE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2011

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I proudly recognize Zoe Fromer, Kirill Safin, and Izaal Lakhia of Atlantic High School in Delray Beach, Florida as Hastings’ Star Students. When state budget cuts to education forced their school to cut back on arts programs, these young people took the task of saving these programs into their own hands. They formed Initiative Renaissance, an aptly named organization that raises funds to restore classes such as drama, musical engineering and chorus. The organization’s \$100,000 fundraising goal would help improve arts facilities and expand the school’s band and visual arts programs. Their mission has garnered national recognition and Initiative Renaissance was accepted into the Pepsi Refresh Project with a chance to win a \$50,000 grant.

Zoe, Kirill, and Izaal’s passion for attaining a well-rounded education demonstrates the folly of cutting funding to arts and education. All students deserve a public education that fully prepares them to compete in the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that these young people chose to fight to save their school’s arts programs and applaud their dedication and perseverance to this project, which has undoubtedly been beneficial to the entire community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GRAND OPENING OF THE CLEVELAND SYRIAN CULTURAL GARDEN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the grand opening of the Cleveland Syrian Cultural Gardens, taking place on May 29, 2011.

The 254-acre piece of land that constitutes Rockefeller Park was donated to the City of Cleveland by John D. Rockefeller in 1896. The Cleveland Syrian Cultural Gardens is a fifty-acre piece of land within Rockefeller Park. These gardens were founded in 1926 to create a memorial area for the diverse ethnic groups that shape the region, and to serve as a space of reflection on peace, cooperation and understanding. The Cultural Gardens is currently a collection of 26 gardens which include African-American, American Indian, British, Chinese, Czech, Estonian, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Polish, and Slovenian gardens, among others.

In 1929, the land for a Syrian Cultural Garden was allotted to the Greater Syrian American Community. The Syrian American and Arab American community have, for over 100 years, played a vital role in the spiritual, social and cultural life of the greater Cleveland community. For unknown reasons, the garden was never planned or built.